1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12



we have here primitive and undeveloped religious sentiment where the personality of the deity is hardly separated from striking natural phenomena, or remnants of some old cultus of the heavenly bodies, mountains, and tribal deities preserved in a hazy way by a military race which had not paid much attention to religion.

The Masai believe that ordinary persons die like cattle, and they throw away their corpses to be eaten by hyenas[1], in the revoltingly unceremonious way common to many East African tribes. Medicine men, however, and influential people are buried, and their souls are said to pass into snakes, which are respected in consequence. Many tribes on the Nile also reverence snakes. It is noticeable that death and misfortune are not attributed to witchcraft. The Laibon is not the same as the Witch Doctor of the Bantu tribes, and it is no part of his duties to detect witches.

As the Masai men will practically do nothing but fight or tend cattle, they are naturally dependent on others for all articles, including their arms, which cannot be manufactured by women. There is among them a special tribe of smiths, called Il-Kunono, who make iron weapons, but are treated as inferiors and not allowed to marry Masai women. A somewhat similar tribe are the Dorobo or hunters.

It would appear that the military organization, the aversion to hunting, to eating game or vegetable food, and to engaging in agriculture or any productive art are peculiarities specially developed by the Masai, though some of them have been imitated by other tribes. Another peculiarity is the shape of their houses—long low buildings constructed of poles, grass, and mud, and divided into rooms by partitions. Their other customs, however, seem to tally with those of the Latuka, Bari, and Dinka, as far as differences of residence and occupation permit. Remarkable points of agreement are the nudity of the men, the shaven heads of the women, extraction of the middle teeth of the lower jaw, resting in a standing position on one leg, drinking the blood from living animals, and spitting as a sign of affection or benediction.

Linguistic evidence points the same way, though ampler and clearer information about the languages of the Nile is desirable for purposes of comparison. It is no want of respect to the labours of Sir H. Johnston and others to say that the researches of Mr. Hollis have for the first time

[1] It has been suggested that this practice may be due to a desire not to contaminate the earth by burial, but Mr. Hollis could find no trace of this idea, although he carefully inquired.

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
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791 793 [753] hengei, nemweiyu, nĕä. Nĕji ĕosh 'M-Batyany il-tuñganak kumok to-'l-kuma lenye, neiteri nĕä, neisho 'M-Batyany ol-chani, neishiu; kake mĕosh Ol-Ônana 'l-tuñganak amu ol-tuñgani oirŭbi.

person sickens and dies. It is said that Mbatian often struck people with his club, and waited until they were about to die, when he gave them medicine and cured them. Lenana, however, is a gentle man and does not kill people in this manner.

## Il-kunŏno.

463 326 Meiyŭlo 'l-Maasae pôkin áidoñgu 'remeta oo 'l-alema, kake en-gias oo-'l-kunŏno, naa ninje ooidoñgu 'n-areta, nein-yañgu 'l-kulikae pôkin.

325 Ore 'n-dŭkitin náidoñgishore 'l-kunŏno to-'l-kŭkwet naa o-soit, o ol-kirisiet, o ol-garamet, o en-gunei. Ore 'n-dŭkitin náidoñgi naa 'l-tidii, oo 'n-dareta, oo 'n-dŭluo, oo 'n-alululñgani, oo 'n-areta, oo 'n-gulye-tŭkitin.

[439] Ore 'seghenge naaata too-'l-Ashumba einyañguni, araki eidoñg o-sinyai lo-'l-keju le-Matapato.

326 564 Metii en-gishŭmi nemeata 'l-kunŏno, kake nabo-kishŭmi naata 'l-kunŏno kumok, nĕji inna-kishŭmi 'l-Kipuyŏni.

Meiyam il-kulikae-Maasae 'n-doiye oo-'l-kunŏno, amu ĕjo

## The smiths [1].

All Masai do not know how to make spears and swords; this is the work of the smiths. It is they who make the weapons, and the others purchase from them.

The smiths use in the forge a stone, a hammer, pincers, and bellows, and they make needles, bracelets, axes, anklets, weapons, and other things.

The iron which they work with they purchase from the Swahili, or they smelt the ore which they find in the bed of the Matapato river.

Every clan has its smiths; but there is one clan, the Kipuyoni, to which most men of this class belong.

The other Masai do not marry the daughters of the smiths, for it

564 1171 [1] The Kunono and Dorobo seem to hold much the same position among the Masai as the Tumaloda (smiths) and Ramis (hunters) among the Somali. No free Somali enters a smithy, or shakes hands with a smith; none takes a wife from this stock, or gives his daughter to a member of it. The Tumaloda are spread over the whole of Somaliland as the Kunono over Masailand, and no instance is known of them giving up the trade. Still more debased and poorer are the Ramis, who, like the Dorobo, live by hunting game. Cp. Ratzel, *The History of Mankind*, vol. ii, p. 494.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12



latter is of little economic significance, except that it is the duty of the warriors to get cattle by raiding. In the division of work, the people mainly concerned are the uncircumcised boys, the girls, and the women. The boys do most of the herding, assisted by the elders. Women and girls milk and act as servants to the warriors. The girls do household work till they are old enough to become lovers of the warriors, when they do very little work. The greater part of the work thus falls on the older women, who besides doing or supervising the milking and other ordinary household tasks like fetching water and firewood, build the huts, load and drive the donkeys when moving, prepare skins for clothing, and trade with neighbouring tribes for food and other things. The warriors used to be occupied exclusively either with war or preparations for war, or with dancing, visiting, and making love. Their military activities have today been replaced by certain tasks connected with cattle, and by cattle-stealing and raids on neighbouring tribes. The senior elders are occupied with political matters, and some of them with the instruction and control of the initiates and younger warriors; they also help with the herding, and take part in trading with the neighbouring peoples.

The only specialists in the economic sphere are the smiths, *il-kunono*, sing. *ol-kunoni*, who live segregated from the rest of the Masai, and marry among themselves. They have a distinctly inferior status, and are despised by the Masai, who oil their hands before taking anything from a smith. At one time the smiths lived near deposits of iron ore, such as those in the Matapato river; but nowadays the availability of trade-iron has given them greater freedom of domicile. They make the iron-work used by the Masai, including spears, swords, and ornaments.[6]

Though according to Hollis a few Masai women made pottery, the Masai as a rule buy their pots from the Bantu.

## Food

Except among the agricultural Masai, no cereal or vegetable food at all is grown, nor was it eaten in the old days by warriors, whose diet consisted of meat, milk, and blood, the latter providing the necessary salt. The animals eaten included their own cattle, buffalo, *ol-osowuan*, and eland, *o-sirua*, which they considered to be related to cattle, and therefore fit to eat.[7] Warriors were not allowed to eat honey, to drink honey-wine, or to take tobacco, though some took snuff. Children and married people eat vegetable food, and the meat of cattle which die a natural death. Warriors when they want to eat meat, build a rough shelter called *ol-pul* in the bush where, accompanied by a boy to do the work, small groups feast upon the meat of an ox supplied by the father of one of their number. The elder who supplies the ox is given some of the meat, and this is one of the regular sources of meat for married people, for meat eating is the regular practice of warriors. Men and women do not eat together, and fish, fowls, eggs, and game other than buffalo and eland are not eaten by any Masai.

## Trade

Since the Masai are not self-supporting, they have to trade with the Bantu agriculturists, *il-meek*, whom they despise, in order to get what they want. Their chief suppliers are the Kikuyu, Chaga, and Taveta; and for certain things, notably ivory and honey, the Dorobo. The media of exchange are cattle (old, barren, and otherwise unsatisfactory cows), old and thin goats and sheep, donkeys, butter, and hides. The principal goods bought are food (beans, millet, maize) and tobacco, which they get from the Bantu; the chief suppliers of meal are Indian traders, often Sikhs,

[6] Leakey says that the Masai buy their swords from the Kikuyu (*JRAI*, LX, p. 209); this may well be the case near the Kikuyu border, though it is perhaps a recent development.

[7] The Galla also consider the buffalo to be the equivalent of the ox. Bahrey, *Historia Gentis Galla*, chap. XX, Guidi.